

Response to Final Office Action mailed January 28, 2008
U.S. Application No. 10/549,979

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's Interview conducted on 19 March 2008, in which several proposed claim amendments were discussed. The amendments submitted herewith are identical to the draft version faxed to the Examiner prior to the Interview and are here presented for entry into the present application. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's willingness to consider these amendments during the Interview and their relationship to the art of record in the application. As discussed in the Interview, Applicants are submitting this Request for Continued Examination in light of the additional review required by the amendments. In light of this timely filed Request for Continued Examination, Applicants request entry of these amendments and reconsideration of the present application.

Applicants note that in this amendment several claims have been added, canceled, and amended. Claims 1-6, 9-10, 12, 15-20, 36, 41-46, 48, 51, 59, 60, 63-66, 68, 70-72, 76-79 have been amended. Claims 27, 47, 49-50, 52-58, 62, and 80-81 are canceled. And Claims 82-94 have been added. Applicants note that many of these amendments have been provided to clarify the language of some of the claims to enable a more clear understanding of the relationship between the various elements. Additionally, some of the claims have been amended to better clarify the function of the permeable sections previously recited. Other claims are amended to merely correct informalities, dependencies, or to maintain consistency between independent and dependent claim terminology. Applicants note that support for the amendments may be found at least in the specification at paragraphs [0051]-[0064] and in the illustrations of Figs. 4-6. Additionally, Applicants note that new claims 88-94 constitute previously pending dependent claims 11, 12, 22, 23, 28, 30, and 42 re-written in independent form, which were indicated to be allowable claims in the Final Office Action.

During the course of the Interview, Examiner considered the amended language of Claim 1 and agreed that the art of record failed to anticipate or render obvious the invention as claimed in amended Claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that the remaining independent claims are similarly patentable over the art of record, either by virtue of amendments similar to Claim 1 or by virtue of having been previously indicated to be allowable.

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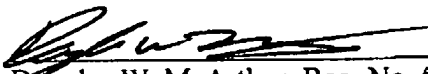
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CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this Application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

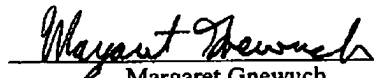
Date: March 20, 2008


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to Examiner Kenneth L. Thompson, Technology Center 3600, United States Patent and Trademark Office at (571) 273-8300 on March 20, 2008.


Margaret Gnewuch